Stillwater Pastorals
and Other Poems

By Paul Shivell

THE NEW POETRY SERIES

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
Boston and New York

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STILLWATER PASTORALS AND OTHER POEMS. Paul Shivell.

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By PAUL SHIVELL

WITH
A PREFATORY NOTE BY
BLISS PERRY

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PREFATORY NOTE

I HAVE asked my friend Paul Shivell's permission to make this selection from his work and to bring it to the attention of other lovers of poetry. Two or three of the poems were printed, some years ago, in the *Atlantic* and the *Century*, and it is a pleasure to remember that they awakened the keen interest of Mr. Norton and Mr. Gilder. Some of the pastoral verses have been issued from the press of a local printer in the "Stillwater" country, but it has been difficult to obtain them. I have had entire freedom in choosing from the author's published and unpublished poems, and if I have failed to make a really representative selection he must forgive me, for he alone will know the full measure of my sins of omission.

Paul Shivell is a veritable farmer, though he has made many another fine adventure, — whimsical, gallant, tragic, — in many parts of the United States. A wandering idealist, he has gone back to the soil. He can plough barefoot, and make verses. Stillwater "*is*," as Carlyle would say, although I forbear to give the post-office address. It lies somewhere east of "Spoon River" and southwest of "North of Boston."

Vital experience, then, is back of these poems. Good or bad, they are convincingly real. Their fidelity to the local landscape is absolute. They betray, of course, in their phrasing and metrical patterns, the tastes of a man who

knows his Milton, Wordsworth, and Shelley, and who has learned, by living for a while in Whittier's country-side, to love Whittier. But they are untouched by any of the conventional ornaments of the "literary" pastoral. Moth and killdee and morning-glory, the crooked stick in the flooded stream, barn-loft and pasture in the light of summer and winter dawns, are portrayed with a naïve sincerity which owes little or nothing to books. They are Paul Shivell's life,—throbbing with tremulous delight in simple things, ardent as a flame, tender, exigent, haunted by that *Sehnsucht* indescribable by any English word.

For he wants, no doubt, what every poet wants: not only the ineffable moment of personal experience, but readers, friends, followers. He has had these last in but scanty measure, and yet in his sonnets he reveals his perfect faith that they will come. "Defeated, we acknowledge no defeat." He asserts, with something of an Elizabethan poet's hunger for earthly immortality, his right to be heard and his certainty of being heard at last. Poets, like saints, sometimes believe because the thing is incredible, and Shivell's personal pride is mingled with the humility of some "poor brother in Christ," dreaming a Tolstoyan dream without any of the fierce anarchic Tolstoyan egoism.

"Poetry bothers most people," Shivell declares, in words that might have been written by Emily Dickinson. It does. Even the professed lovers of poetry will be bothered by some of Shivell's harsh and prosaic lines, his willfully imperfect rhymes, and the obstinacy of his quiet assertion that his day will come. His sonnets are too personal for the richest variety of note and cadence, and the "proud remote

obscurity" to which he clings will seem to some readers a passion inconsistent with his ultimate willingness to be discovered. But brother poets are not likely to misunderstand his case. The new generation of enthusiasts for American verse may find Paul Shivell lacking in the technical inventiveness which discovers novel and intricate forms of expression, but they will not turn many pages of this volume before finding that here is the revelation of a personality unique in our twentieth-century literature, as Emily Dickinson was unique among the writers of the preceding generation. No doubt Paul Shivell is a "minor" poet, but in that phrase the adjective is less significant than the noun. I, at least, writing frankly as one of his friends, find in his work a rare and delicate savor, and an authentic inspiration.

BLISS PERRY.

CAMBRIDGE, *October, 1915.*

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STILLWATER PASTORALS

STILLWATER PASTORALS

MOTH AND KILLDEE

Was ever richest Oriental cloth
Beautiful as this damask-winged moth!
Fair creature! I could watch thee by the hour.
But oh, this young killdee! — this flying flower! —
This wild-eyed throbbing lily in my hand! —
Startles my soul with more ecstatic pain
Than even thou hast power to command
Of my delightsomely bewildered brain,
Thou awe-inspiring insect! Go, sweet bird,
I would not hold thee till I found the word
Expressive of what loveliness I see
In all God's works, but most just now in thee!
That thou shouldst fear me grieves my heart — but flee —
Run, frightened thing,
Into the reeds — there hide by the cool spring!
To-morrow thou wilt realize
Thy dim dream of the skies! —
Thy wings — thy voice! — wilt fly and wheel and scream
Through God's dominions.
And like a wild seagull wilt gleam,
Skimming along this creek on joyous pinions,

And over the plow'd fields, timid, but swift,
Easily graceful of the gift
Thy Maker gave thee quickly to uplift
And bear thyself away from harm,
Sounding thy distant seabirdlike alarm!
And I will watch thee as thou goest
Up and down the valley, wading, running, flying, —
And every glimpse of thy white wings thou showest,
Even thine alarmed crying,
Through my senses shall appeal
To the joys and griefs I feel.
Thou wilt signal and wilt speak
To my spirit!
And echoing along this inland creek
Wilt bid me love my home the more,
Because thy glad wild presence doth endear it.
Thou wilt transport me to the shore
Of mighty deeps,
Where the wind seldom sleeps,
But heaving billows that no rocks affright
Out of the darkness loom,
Or bursting into bloom
Of many-color'd light,
In sun and moon and lofty starbright night,
Forevermore
In awful solemnity

ON THE MIAMI

With the swelling and falling tide
Come and subside
And return to the wide,
Wide sea. —
Entranc'd I watch and listen and adore!
And each oncoming, rising, streaming wall
Aspiring to groin its dome
Will fall,
Breaking afresh into crystal ruins of glorious foam!—
To pour
And rush and roar
And sigh
And spread in beauty ever o'er
The clean white shell-strewn floor
Of the wide, wide world alway,
Where a thousand years are as a day.
Dimmer and dimmer
The glad gulls in the distance glimmer.
Summer is gone: I miss thy gleam and cry.

ON THE MIAMI

A FLUTE came o'er the water in the night!
Sober and sweet it wander'd down the scale;
And back returning with a deep delight,
It reach'd the golden stars, and told its tale!

Warbling, it came, a swan under full sail,
Waking melodious miles! While hush'd afar,
As from a happier fellow soul, but frail,
Lost in the passionate fluting, a guitar
Answer'd across the waves like a confiding star!

Then voices of two souls in love with life
Went floating down the river in the moon;
And softlier with the singing came the tune
Of the faint cithern and the sacred fife.
We lean'd with clasped hands o'er that deep hour,
Until the music of contented love
Wound into river stillness, — when above
We heard the first breath of the coming shower
Rustling the foliage. Slowly then toward home
We stroll'd beneath wide elms in the green gloom;
And Gertrude, all in white, look'd like a flower.

STILLWATER

Stillwater, on thy mirror'd banks,
Maiden and youth, my Love and I,
Oft from the old wood's broken ranks
Watch'd o'er the lake the evening sky.
Tranquilly flow'd thy current by,
We scarce could deem it was a river,

Where Heaven, that look'd so still and high,
Seemed deepening in thy depths forever!

Oft on a mild, sweet Sabbath hour
We wander'd there, two happy lovers,
Down woodland paths, through fields in flower,
Where bees buzz'd round the drooping clovers.
Curtain'd in green bird-haunted nook,
Beneath an aged sycamore,
We read sweet poems from a book,
And sang beside thy sacred shore.

The sun declined, the landscape blush'd,
And droop'd in its luxuriant beauty;
High overhead the leaves were hush'd;
And bells came from the distant city.
Along the gravel clutch'd the roots
Of elms that lean'd out o'er the water,
And swept the lovers who in boats
Oar'd gurgling through their shade with laughter.

Lightly the ripples wash'd the grass;
And lighter, swifter dipt the swallow.
The widening wake would curve and pass,
And sympathetic silence follow;
Till up and down thy golden stream,
In the dark woods and still reflections,

The deepening picture, like a dream,
Grew Eden-old in all directions.

Mysterious feelings, with the night,
Crept o'er us, sitting there together;
The ancient stars grew young and bright.
We seem'd to understand each other.
And when at last we rose to go,
She gave me something for a token;
Long as thy whispering waters flow,
Our promises will ne'er be broken.

Slow since, through unjust penury,
Far from thy scenes we 've toil'd and blunder'd;
And, praying men might soon be free,
The Truth we 've taught, and seen dishonor'd.
And Oh! may He Who loves us all
Come quickly, and abide forever,
That on the human race may fall
The beauty of the woods and river.

AS THROUGH THE DAWN

As through the dawn I took my way,
Holding a morning-glory flower,
Up buzz'd a roving bumble bee,
And lit, and crept into my bower,

Sipt and withdrew and buzz'd and flew
In search of other nectarous dew.

The mealy pollen from his thighs,
White foam upon blue swelling ocean,
Or silver stars in moonlight skies,
Symbols of natural devotion,
Reveal'd on silken fluttering field
The shrine where he had been and kneel'd.

But he, most comical to see,
That big important busy fellow,
Sipping oblivious of me,
Bare-legg'd and fat, with sash of yellow,
Hairy and happy and content,
As on his morning rounds he went, —

I laugh'd to see him booming wild,
Unconscious of his place in nature,
Not getting riled because I smiled,
Nor shamed at his inferior stature;
He 's not an eagle, just a bumble.
Brave mite! That men were half as humble.

SEEDTIME

We harrow'd the sandy bottom lands,
The horses and I, with the harrow's hands;
With the harrow's fingers we finger'd it over,
And claw'd it up, and dragg'd it down,
To sow a field of grass and clover,
Far from the city, in sight of the town;
In sight of the quiet country village,
Near the pasture lowland that smelleth sweet,
With open bosom and naked feet
I follow'd the harrow and waded the tillage,
Back and forth, back and forth,
Gee-ing south, and gee-ing north,
With now a pause and welcome rest
For enraptured poet and patient beast.

A lark mounts up where the rosebrier bends,
And over the meadow rising and falling,
A voice out of the distance calling,
Into a neighboring farm descends.
There on her nest he findeth his mate;
And mine will be in the lane at the gate;
The little ones on the team will ride,
And I 'll go home with them by her side.

WINTER MORNING

I RISE and look out at the window, Love,
And all the stars are shining. While I dress
Lie thou and take thy needful morning sleep;
And I will tiptoe downstairs with the lamp,
And build the kitchen fire, the table set
For breakfast, and our patient creatures greet
With lantern in the stable where they chew
Meekly their fodder. Frosty are the nights,
Wholesome and stinging cold. When the room 's warm,
Or when thou wilt, come down and dress thyself
By jealous lamplight, yellow in the dawn,
Leaving the wee ones to surprise us late,
When from their natural rest, bewilder'd half,
They wake and rub their sleepy eyes, looking
For us. Then they 'll grope down, and smile "Good Morning,"
And dress before the kitchen fire, and eat
Their porridge from their little porringers.
So we 'll begin another busy day,
With thankful hearts lifting our prayer to Heaven:
That thus may we ever be honest people,
And bring our children up to work and play
Contentedly and in the sight of God.

MOONS WAX, MOONS WANE

Moons wax, moons wane,
Earth will soon be young again!
Then I 'll wander in the wood,
By brooks, through fields, in solitude,—
Everywhere I wish I 'll wander!
Up the hillside over yonder,
Thence where weeds grow tall and rank
Down along the river bank;
Yearning o'er each lovely view,
Sky and water, deep and blue,
Scenes and vistas fair through trees,
Clouds and sunbeams, birds and bees;
Bee and bird, sunshine and shade,
Moon and stars when winds are laid,
Whispering to me of Him
Whom I love, Whose child I am.

Blow, winds, wake the flowers!
Warm and sweet, ye April showers,
Drench them, sparkling with bright faces
In obscure delightful places!
Fresh as pretty children's eyes,
Deeply they reflect the skies,

JUNE SECOND

In dewdrops and fine rainspray
That, sun-kiss'd, in clouds away
Wafted by the wind, go blowing
Where sweet sister flowers are growing,
Prone to fall in silver rain
From the purple clouds amain,
Of the high sun's golden streams
Weaving rainbows and sunbeams,
Earth and sea and clouds and river
Flowing forth in flowers forever!

JUNE SECOND

THIS anniversary of our marriage morn,
The eighth in bright succession, is, though clouded,
Our brightest. All past griefs are nothing now
To this one joyous grief that overshadows
As with protecting wings two startled children,
Who had begun to think themselves grown big;
But now, bewildered, vaster ignorance
Compels more reverent trust; and we bear up
And live through this dumbfounding mystery
By mutual acknowledgments of need,
And of dependent, babelike helplessness.
O God! that we had always trusted Thee
As now we think we trust Thee; had but loved

As now we cling together day and night
In spiritual agreement that no words
Can utter, so expressive is the hush
That puts to shame all but the thought of Thee.

THE RESCUE

Up in this lofty mow pitching down straw,
And looking out upon this broad-braced frame
Which Atlas-like supports the roof above me,
Where herculean atlantes struggle to hold
In bounds this bulky mass of roughage, — high
In this plank whale's huge belly, — or on rocks
Above the sea, like old Poseidon leaning
Upon his trident, — or more like young Shem
Forking down feed for hairy mastodons! —
Alone with God, and in His eye at work,
I, usefully employ'd, am over chaos
Triumphant! Thus a child, sent to hunt eggs,
Tumbles about the hay with gleeful heart,
Filling with chaff his curls, and laughs aloud,
Careless of thought's restraint, yet not alone,
For God is with him and restrains with Love
His human heart.

From this oak purline beam
I see that situation perilous

From which last summer with uplifted heart,
Down-reaching hand and muscular contortion,
I rescued my own boy, the only child
Now left me in a world where without children
Life would be very lonely. Little adventurer!
We thresh'd the day before, and blew the straw
Up in this mow! Swift from the fierce machine
Flying, it fell in cavernous confusion,
Lightly as when in winter all night long
The soft snow falls and covers the thin ice
Upon the deep dark rivers, lakes and ponds.
Thus treacherous with pitfalls was it left
Of its own weight to settle. Hither the boy,
Anxious lest something in this wondrous world
Escape his sight, climb'd yonder ladder, and stept, —
Not as he thought to, on well-founded footing, —
But down into a pit of dust and chaff,
Whose walls above him hung as on a web,
Ready to bury him alive! The child,
Not knowing his great peril, kept his head,
And call'd for me! I heard him, as it chanced
(Or was it not God's will that I should hear him?
For we were all out resting on the porch).
The second time! I seem'd to hear him call:
Faint, far, as if his voice came out of the ground!
Now toward the stable running, shouting loud!

Not certain where he was, nor what his plight
Might prove: "Papa! Papa! I 'm up behind these doors
Down in the straw!" By leaps I cleared the stairs,
Climb'd ladder, cross'd hay, looking down, here grasp'd
— Fortunate was my heart to find at hand
These big substantial doors whence I, to batten
Clinging, might reach down in that dangerous place
And give the little thoughtless child my hand!
So God hath many a time given me His!
And gave me now, else had I not yet found
The body of my boy, nor guess'd, alas,
His fate nor whereabouts even to this hour!
Never did all my muscles, bones and sinews
To their respective offices attend
With so much eager willingness to do
Each one his part! For afterwards I knew,
When I had drawn him up, and those chaff walls
Had slipp'd and fill'd that hole, I knew I could not
With all my might and will repeat the twist,
So surely did God help me in that moment
Of instant extreme helplessness. O heart!
How we did praise Him through uplifted silence,
Panting with agitation! As if angels
Witness'd the need and deed, and for the praise
Hung listening! that they, too, might render Him
Sweet *jubilate*, such as they in Heaven

Shout, when the Shepherd findeth one lost lamb,
And on His shoulder beareth it to the Fold!

WILL AND TESTAMENT

When from this house of clay I go,
And with solemn step and slow,
Respectful to the honor'd dead,
Tenderly ye lay this head,
With its pallid upturn'd face,
In its last long resting-place,
Close beside the little mound
In the village burial ground,
There to mingle surely, slowly,
With the dust of proud and lowly,
Then, oh! then weep not for me:
Smile and say: Our child is free!

When upon my grave shall bloom
Flowers that shed their sweet perfume,
Holy incense unto God
From the almost conscious sod:
When the meadow lark shall build
Yearly in the neighboring field,
Little children play and sing,
Whistles blow, and school bells ring,

While the busy world moves on
Peacefully from sire to son,
Then, oh! then weep not for me:
Say, He loved us, he is free!

Yes, may all that know my voice,
When they pass my grave, rejoice.
May no word or deed of mine,
Lingering in the sweet sunshine,
Cast a shadow o'er that spot
Where the soul returneth not.
When the evening prayers are said
When the world in sleep is laid,
And upon my headstone white
Stars and moon look down at night,
Then, oh! then weep not for me:
Rest, dear heart, for I am free.

Yes, when we from flesh are freed,
Then we shall be free indeed.
Earth's old heartaches and its woes
Come not where the spirit goes.
There in Beauty and in Truth
Palsied age renews its Youth;
There, forgiven, the defiled
Finds himself once more a child.

TO A CROOKED STICK

All the lovely, brave and kind
One another There shall find.
Soon, mingling with that Company,
Thou and I, O friend! will be.

Then let no monumental stone
Mark my grave when I am gone,
To attract with show and fuss
The idle and the curious.
Enough, if they who loved me best
Know the body's place of rest,
Or the green grass where to grow,
Or, where to fall, the silent snow.
A life of kindness build and give
To the hearts that round thee live.
If there 's any on whose head
Praise is wasted, 't is the dead.

TO A CROOKED STICK

Crooked stick against the dam,
Caught, as on this world I am,
Here, perhaps, from some great distance,
Onward float by my assistance,
Down the foaming, rushing torrent,
Helpless in the eddying current,

Deaf and blind, — O lifeless thing, —
What wild river thoughts you bring!
Pangs and longings heave my breast
While I watch you, without rest
Speeding from your recent capture,
Up and down as if in rapture!
Now not visible, and then
Rising to my sight again,
Till in watery distance lost, —
Gone, I whisper, to be toss'd
On some bank where myriads
Come and float away in floods;
Or swift past where struggling trees
Strain, in water to their knees;
Giants that lean and sway and breast
The onward elemental quest;
Maybe to be caught a while;
Then released for many a mile;
Finally, far from the ocean,
In age-long-arrested motion
Buried under tons of slime,
To be mud thyself in time.
Yet, though as a thing forgot
In oblivion thou rot,
Never can my soul believe
But thou must thy quest achieve!

TO A CROOKED STICK

Brainless, aimless as thou seemest,
Back to life thou ever dreamest,
And must yet become all things
That have legs and leaves and wings,
As, through various forms endear'd,
In the past thou hast appear'd;
Or, repulsive as a sin,
Shalt be as thou oft hast been.
Onward, seaward, without rest, —
What excitement heaves my breast
When I think whence camest thou:
Whither on thy long course now!
All these bones, this blood, these muscles,
Wherewith oft my spirit wrestles,
Come and go and leave me here,
Still triumphant over fear,
An immutable bright spirit,
Far-predestin'd by the Merit
Of that Wondrous Power Benign
That about this soul of mine
Built this body and sustains it,
Then, in Vaster Mercy, brains it! —
As in mercy I erstwhile,
With a wise and friendly smile,
Sent yon stick upon its course
Through the Starry Universe!

DECEMBER DAYS

ERE yet these grounds and buildings loom from night,
Or when by the waning moon kept visible
Earth seems to anticipate the winter dawn,
And cocks are crowing near and far, I wake,
Slowly I quit my dreams, I wake, think, will,
And leap from my warm bed into the cold,
Enter the house, light lamp, build fire, strip, bathe,
Dashing my body with water fresh from the spring,
Rub with coarse towel and quickly get inside
My chilly clothing, by warm robust health
Soon comfortable ; and after I have swallow'd
A few deep drafts of water I light my lantern
And go out under the stars, in the dim moon,
Or through black darkness, while the frozen world
Is very still, or a light breeze, a wind, a storm
Goes blowing around buildings, among trees
And through the cold sky over lonely fields
And pastures. To the barn I come and enter
The stable door. Cows, horses, calves are up
Watching for me, or get up stretching themselves
As I come in, or feel too comfortable
To move until they hear the feedbox open'd
And see that that means business. Now they 're eating ;

And I am milking now; and having milk'd
And done the chores, I come in, greet my family,
Blithe, serious, or as my changeful mood
May happen, help my frail wife at her tasks,
Urge or admonish the children, till at seven
We all sit down to breakfast. I read the Bible:
We bow our heads; and in the love of Christ
Repeat together the simple prayer He taught
His Own when He with folk like us on Earth
Lived out His Father's Message. At my hand
The Holy Book I like to feel and see
Which from last night still on the kitchen table
Lies open to invite my soul. And so
With praise and gratitude begins my day
As yesterday was ended, and as the morrows
I hope to meet and leave, while on I go
To face my God and render strict account
Of hours and years, a life to Christian purpose
Gladly devoted for the love of Him
Who died for me. So among neighbors and friends
We walk with our Creator and go forth
Sowing as we would reap, our tabernacles
Aging and weakening from year to year,
But we, with elder prophets and apostles
And all the upright in heart who were supported
And strengthen'd and refresh'd, we shall endure

As from our birth, from youth to age, from age
To Life Eternal, ever rising new
And going forth from temporal defeat
Unto eventual victory, through sorrow
Daily with joy advancing toward That City,
That Fair, that Holy City of our Father
And of His Christ, That City which hath foundations,
Whose Builder and whose Architect is God.

ON BEING URGED TO PUBLISH

WHAT prophet can illuminate God's World —
What seer make duty clearer — or what priest,
Standing between the people and their Maker,
Darkeneth not their faith, if in that heart
Fine reverence be wanting? And shall Thy poet,
Making a traffic of his secret joy,
Profane thy holy sanctuaries, Lord,
Built in the open air, where all thy works
In their simplicity fulfill unnoticed
The purpose of their being? As these live,
So let me live, rooted in Thee; so die,
Scattering pregnant seeds; nor task thy birds,
Nor coax thy willing winds, nor bribe thy seasons
To do with mine as they from the beginning,
True to their old appointed tasks, have done.

AS DAY, SO SPRING RETURNS

As day, so Spring returns; as Spring, so Life;
As Life, so Love; as Love, so Paradise.
And He Who sanctifieth man and wife
Sustains this homesick heart, these longing eyes,
This restless mind, this throbbing frame of dust,
With holy thoughts of Heaven, whither, I trust,
By His dear grace, through conscious word and act,
My faltering footsteps ever to direct:
Happy at how much cause for Hope there is
Beyond what we could comprehend if told.
What Knowledge to the Light will There unfold,
When we and all we see and love are His!
While our bright aspirations, far-foreseeing,
Rest still in God's Great Heart, content with Instant Being.

TO A BLOODROOT FLOWER

Bloodroot in the leafless wood,
Companion of gray Solitude,
When the birds begin to sing,
Thou, frail welcomer of Spring,
Dost thy white-ray'd star unfold,
With its seedheart of green-gold,

And remindest us how Faith
Blooms victorious over Death.

Spring now from her slumber waketh,
And unto each lover speaketh,
Breathing through her flowers and birds
Joy too deep for human words,
Knowledge that doth most abound
Where, unmarr'd, God's works are found ;
For by every bosom noble
God is found without much trouble.

Welcome, shy and fragile flower,
And though cold and brief thine hour,
May thy holy message given
Brighten Earth with news from Heaven,
And awake in many a heart
Longings lovely as thou art,
Aspirations pure and good,
Hopes by angels understood.

As thy petals not in vain
Brave the long and cheerless rain,
So when we as thou some day
From the cold earth fade away,

Having here fulfill'd our mission,
May we leave in Earth's possession
Seeds of Love, matured like thine,
Humbly, sweetly, rain or shine.

IN FEW WORDS

A BLESSING is a curse,
If it make a bad man worse;
And the reverse:
A fall may prove a fortunate matter,
If it make a good man better;
To be terse,
God does not flatter;
But whether the mind be deep or shallow
Plows deep, so deepens,
Or lets lie fallow.
Who wants to be
A neglected lea
All overgrown with wormwood and mallow?
Wherefore, if thou be doing His will,
Be still;
And on every occasion
Accept as a divine persuasion
Whatever happens.
An hard saying?

Yes;
But without evasion
Hear it!
Truth is no idle guess:
He who, obeying,
Learns to revere it
Finds no truth truer
Pack'd in words fewer:
Do, and thou shalt know the Will:
Then, and not until.

FINALE

THE golden-winged hours,
The silvery summer showers,
Fairies and flowers,
Birds, clouds, rainbows and happy minutes
Pass like music, swiftly,
As when maidens deftly
Play laughter and tears upon their spinets.
But the Day will come
When the Poet will go Home
And a deathless Life assume,
Where Beauty lives forever,
And the gentle Springtime never,
Never will grow hot;

And the winter cometh not;
Nor cares nor weariness call away
From fadeless flowers; nor night nor day
Bring afflictions, which we bear
Meekly, because we must:
Must learn our Father's Life to share,
To love Him and to trust.
O Joy and Sorrow! mutual pair,
Ye teach us more than we 're aware.

So let me live, so let me die,
Where I am, that by and by
Where I go
I may know
More than little flowers teach;
Truths that now I cannot reach;
Beauty see that comes not nigh
The window of man's wondering eye;
Join in Music which for sound
Cannot in this world be found:
Not faint, not far, but clear,
Such as in my dreams I hear,
Wonderful beyond expression,
My Desire, my Hope, my Passion!

Everywhere,
In the air,
In the earth and stars and sea,
All unite,
Agony and delight,
Sounds, colors, forms, to tell
What my Lord would have me do,
What my Lord would have me be.
So, merry birds, my thanks to you:
All you say, I know, is true.
And pensive flowers, well indeed
You speak, I understand you well.
If, when your blooms are gone to seed,
I to these happy fields return,
Of each dead stalk and trampled weed
Oh! may I deeper lessons learn
Than in your freshness I discern,
As deeper, deeper grows my need.

TO JANE REECE, PHOTOGRAPHER

TO JANE REECE, PHOTOGRAPHER

I

THE STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHIC

By every light, in every pose,
In God's Eternal Studios,
The human heart, with frown or laugh,
Is posing for its photograph.
Sweet smile; sad, serious expression;
Honor triumphant over passion:
Oh! wonderful are the effects
He through Truth's living lens detects,
As, instant, watchful for the best,
Behind the curtain without rest,
In loving eagerness He waits
To catch our souls on deathless plates!

Fear not the darkness that surrounds
Thy character. On dark backgrounds,
With light from Heaven in thy face,
What tones He gets! With what fine grace
He molds and modulates and blends
The history of face and hands:

Revealing through what grief and bliss
The spirit came to look like this!
To look like Him Who long ago
For His good pleasure plann'd it so,
That He in His Eternal Home
Might treasure them in Time to Come!

Through unknown fortunes yet to be,
Beneath the stars, beside the sea,
Between the birthday and the grave,
Teaching the tender heart be brave,
He woos our better from our worse,
The Artist of the Universe!
The undiscouraged Connoisseur
Of priceless human character!
The glory of Whose presence fills
With master might the steadfast hills!
While deep within our souls it glows
From all His starry studios!

II

Voice musical with sacred joy and pain,
Eyes in whose merriment the more I look
Deeper I see as page by page the book
Reveals the heroine: deft hand, tired brain,

Serving a traffic world without disdain, —
For she hath caught the secret of the brook
Through somber fields by many a shadowy nook
Meandering where clouds roll vast with rain, —
O gently penetrating tender heart
Intuitive, by spiritual gift
Outseeing masculine interpreters!
Thou showest us by more than practiced art
Our starlit spirits, as when night-clouds rift,
And we are found among God's worshipers.

III

NEVER hard light full on thy subject streaming
Our carnal cruelly exaggerates;
But as a painter with himself debates,
And chooseth values by instinctive scheming,
Thou makest us appear as if caught dreaming:
The body thinks! The Furies and the Fates
Look from his eyes who in thy presence waits!
A pose for thee is no self-conscious seeming.
I marvel how, unto the human thought
Summon'd, the human character, responding,
Lives awfully recorded thus in matter!
I marvel what the human mind hath wrought!
But more I marvel What and how astounding
That Power Which works through man and cannot flatter!

IV

TRUE artists are true lovers of the True.
Though sadly supersensitive to stings,
Grieving for slights, and letting unkind things
Thoughtlessly spoken wound them through and through,
They still to what the world may say and do
Temper their wits, and with defiant flings
Compel unspeakable joy! like warrior kings
Foresworn on Book to conquer and subdue.
So thou and I, frail woman and strong man,
Through agony go smiling to endure.
Defeated, we acknowledge no defeat!
Out of our windblown ashes, with hope's plan,
And love's fond faith in love no whit less sure,
We rise to life, and find even sorrow sweet.

V

ARTHUR, MY SON

ARTHUR, my son, to manhood now aspiring,
What schemes of high emprise fill thy young head
And urge thee onward! Ah, what deeds of dread
Thine inexperienced eager heart are firing!
What fond beliefs beyond utmost desiring
Impel thy play! What armies hast thou led

Over what battlefields, and hast left dead
How many, while thy fame the stars are choiring!
O little boy becoming a big youth,
Only to be a little man like us,
Who once were growing large and fine like you!
I wonder which small segment of the Truth,
In thy brief life at most, shall not nonplus
That dreaming head, but shall, please God, come true!

VI

PICTURES NOT LIFE

THE life, the throbbing life, aglow with health,
In look, speech, toil, tears, laughter manifesting
The imminent Creator, praying, jesting, —
An instrument responsive with a wealth
Of sweet harmonious moods, whereon by stealth
An unseen Master plays! Who, by arresting
Attention on the instant, and suggesting
Of music's indivisible commonwealth
One rare elusive chord, can through the eye
Unto the soul translate and amplify
And clothe with life and bring back warm again
That fleeting moment in this fixed smile,
Or this expression, characteristic then,
But perish'd now, our sad hearts to beguile?

"I MARVEL"

"I MARVEL"

I

IMMINENCE

I MARVEL not that I did marvel much;
For still I marvel more the more I live,
To find my God so near that I can touch
His garments, and with heart grown sensitive
Can know His will and do it and forgive
And feel forgiven and in Him be held
Safe above all that I would fain outlive,
Unto His Heavenly Kingdom uncompel'd!
Wherefore in praise I will not be excel'd!
But ever sing with grateful voice of gladness!
Though in this life much cause have I beheld
For overwhelming sorrow. Nay, 't were madness
Not to rejoice in Thee, Thou wondrous Being,
Whom Christ-anointed eyes are ever clearer seeing!

II

EXALTATION

Rejoice with wonder, O my soul, rejoice!
And you, ye starry heavens, thou vast hush,
That art so far thou hast for us no voice,
Lend me your silent rapture! With a rush
Come, ye æolian winds that bring the blush
Of holy morning to the eastern sky!
And you, ye springs and fountains that forth gush
To seek the sea! Sweet flowers that smile and die,
And O, thou glorious majesty on high,
Which art the life of all this beauteous Earth!
Come and possess me as the birds that fly,
And lift my being into vocal birth,
Deep on wide wings ascending, till I tell
The glory of our God, that ye have told so well!

III

HUMILITY

I CANNOT praise Thee, Father, as I would.
I am Thy child ; Thou dost not need my praise.
A contrite spirit is best understood
Between Thee and my weakness. All my ways
To Thee are known. Thy mercies wide amaze
My understanding. I am very far
From all I would be ; and my wasted days
Would ruin all my happiness, and mar
With many a doubt the glad sweet days that are ;
But Thou dost not remember them: Thou leadest
Forward my willing feet, healest the scar
Upon my soul, and at Thy table feedest
Thine awkward fumbling child, who in Thy face
Beholdeth no reproach, but tenderest love and grace.

GOD BUILT CREATION

GOD BUILT CREATION

God built Creation
  Boundless as Heaven,
    Broader than Science,
      Deeper than Hell!
Made Him a Nation
  Of sinners forgiven,
    Fill'd with defiance,
      Fierce to do well!
O boundless Creation!
Ah, limited Hell!

Angels assembled
  Out of low creatures,
    Lower than lowest,
      Foul beneath shame!
God they resembled
  In heart-haunting features:
    The swiftest, the slowest,
      All started, all came!
O sinless Assembly!
Ah, fortunate shame!

God made an Eagle,
  Wild, free and daring,

Prism-eyed, vocal,
Heart of a Dove:
Domestic with regal
Combining, declaring,
Cosmic with local,
Fierce passion with love!
O anguishing Eagle!
Ah, rapturous Dove!

God made Music human,
Kingly, ambitious,
All eyes, touch, hearing,
Angelical voice!
Manbeast born of woman,
Aggressively gracious,
Composite, forthfaring,
Oh, weep and rejoice!
Ah, sorrowful Poet!
O confident Voice!

MIDSUMMER SADNESS

PIPE on, sweet birds, forget not your glad tune;
Though sad hearts hear it now, glad hearts will soon.
Blow freshly still, soft breezes, and waft down
To all the black and noisome shops in town

LIBERTY

Our kind Creator's message to the poor,
Of fragrant flowers that wait on every shore,
Where gurgling brooks foam fast to lakes and seas,
And grasses deep invite to noble ease.
Here no employer cold, nor servile clerk,
Turns out the faithful father from his work,
Nor maiden hears lust's awful secret threat,
Nor fears on every hand the silken net;
But starving souls, since souls do starve, may lie
Beneath God's trees, and look up at the sky,
And feel with each tired breath that ebbs away
The benediction of a better day.

LIBERTY

In dark cities, frightful cities,
Ugly, slum-cursed, cruel cities,
  Where my innocents are dying,
Whom the subtle tyrant pities,

Throng'd in loath'd rooms, hot, unhealthy,
Driven by the proud and wealthy,
  Toil my children, my pale children,
With their thoughts deprav'd and filthy.

But I love them, ah, I love them,
They are noble, time shall prove them,

They shall rise up unresentful,
And forgive the fools that drove them

I am moving from the meadows
Toward the sad-eyed babes and widows
In great cities where cathedrals
Cast their sacrilegious shadows.

I am waking, I am waking
In the temples hot and aching,
In the throbbing cells of reason
Where the engine heart is shaking.

I can feel the thrill of nations
Toiling at dull occupations,
Sad and beautiful and beating
With unconscious expectations.

I am rising, I am growing,
I 'm the wondrous flower that 's blowing
In the mock-artistic cities,
Where the rich crowd dwells unknowing.

I the mighty, the victorious,
I the beautiful, the glorious,
I will lift my poor and teach them,
I will make them sweet and serious.

In the future, ah, the future,
How their souls will grow in stature!
How their smiles will beam with brightness
At the knowledge of their nature!

Strong in love sincere and holy,
Burying each ancient folly,
They shall turn their faces onward
With a reverence deep and lowly.

I will teach them, I will guide them,
Strife shall never more divide them,
They shall bring forth all their virtues
Like glad children, and not hide them.

And their knowledge, aye, their knowledge,
Not to-day in sect nor college
Is the secret of their greatness
Which shall triumph o'er this dull age.

Free, undriven, they shall follow,
Not your vain pretenses hollow,
But the harrow on the hillside,
And the heaving ocean billow.

Like this lily's petals folden
O'er her heart perfum'd and golden,

As she floats in mirror'd landscape,
Fearing not, to none beholden, —

Yonder swallows, dipping, splashing,
Off like winged sunlight flashing, —
Bees that busily in clover
Sip Heaven's dew, — these winds refreshing,

That from out the morning stillness
Bring thee such calm sense of realness
From the great unknown Forever,
Like a dream of Heaven in illness, —

So my children, changed and healthy,
All united and all wealthy,
So my children, my poor children,
Rising from their rags so filthy,

Frank, intelligent and human,
Will become free men and women
Of a nation born of nations,
With one Code, one Life in common.

Bountiful to greet their coming,
Hills and deserts will be blooming:
All the labor of all ages
Come to fruit, for their assuming.

In yon deeps, at night resplendent,
With calm trustfulness transcendent,
  They will follow Truth and Beauty,
Lovers all, each independent.

Till some time, like allegory
Vast, undream'd, the human story
  Told shall be: but out beyond it
Scenes of Love untransitory,

Not unlike this present seeming,
Yet divine beyond all dreaming,
  Will restore each soul immortal
Where the Sun of Life is streaming.

They are thinking. I am looking
From their dull eyes, rising, choking
  In their hungry throats; and hearken:
At your door I 'm knocking, knocking.

THE FLIGHT IN THE NIGHT

Age of rubbish, passing, passing,
Age of servile acquiescing,
Age of evil, age of liars, —
Hurry, hurry, feed the fires!

Sweating, sighing, bleeding, burning,
Forward, on the future yearning,
Slowly, slowly rise the masses
As the system passes, passes!

Upward, onward, outward, Godward,
Eyes aflame, with many a loud word,
Written, spoken, — singing, singing,
Whistles blowing, steeples ringing!

Join the masses! Join the masses!
Sinking are the cliques and classes!
Sinking, sinking, doom'd and dying, —
See the toilers flying, flying!

Quit the follies, — follow, follow, —
All your tricks are hack'd and hollow!
Leave false hopes ere all be gone, —
Hurry, hurry, hurry on!

Lo! we're halfway up the mountains:
Prairies, homesteads, fields and fountains,
What are all these scenes we're seeing,
On to which we 're fleeing, fleeing!

Misty splendors of the morning,
Waters, vales, and hills adorning!

Far behind the low fires glimmer
Where the past grows dimmer, dimmer.

Socialism! Socialism!
Bore the hills and bridge the chasm!
On, ye living! Cheer ye dying!
See the toilers flying, flying!

Wake and love, ye proud, oh, waken!
Forward, lest ye be forsaken!
Give your wealth, and leave your worry!
Buy ye wings, and hurry, hurry!

DUST OF OLD DAYS

Old days remember'd
  Bring back their sadness.
Mountains dark-timber'd,
  As the sun sinks,
Throw their deep shadows
  Over Earth's gladness.
Dark are the meadows
  When the heart thinks.

Dear are old pictures:
  Dearer the saddest.

Life's sweetest mixtures
  Taste of the tears.
Harsh things and strange things
  Come to the gladdest;
Yet who would change things,
  Weighing the years?

Ah, I would change things!
  Not for my own life.
I would arrange things
  For all men's good.
I would recover
  Men from their lone strife!
I am the lover
  Of noblehood!

TO A SEAGULL

Bird of the stormy wing,
  Out o'er the flying sea!
What is the news you bring?
  I, too, am wild like thee!
I, too, can scream and sing
  Free! Free! Free!

Bird of the rocky home,
  Swept by the flying mist,

Why do you scream and roam?
  Why seek ye not your nest?
Lo, the night cranes are come:
  Rest. Rest. Rest.

Over the rolling tide
  Home to my mate I go:
Little ones merry-eyed
  Wait for me now I know,
There by my fireside!
  Row! Row! Row!

WAR BREAKS OUT IN EUROPE, AUGUST, 1914

I

When from the curious excited throngs,
  A man of thoughtful care, I hide my face,
  And in the ear of God make simple songs
  To please my unspoil'd heart and with wild grace
Immortalize our virtues, time and place
  Bind me no more: for then my soul belongs
  To other scenes than these, where nothing base
  Disturbs the tranquil mind, nor hint of wrongs
Upon the spiritual sense intrudes;
  But sin and strife are as bad dreams forgot;
  And darkest sorrows and most bitter moods

Rise glorified, or vanish into naught.
Then do I see, as though my cares were wings,
The inevitable outcome of all things.

II

War will not always plague the sure advance
Of calm intelligent Hope and gentle Peace.
Can man delay Creation? Is there chance
With the Almighty? Think! For war must cease, —
Must pass from Heaven's development in man,
As God foreknew from the beginning, — He
Who waxt not old with time, nor ever ran
Before His purpose, nor forgot to be,
Upon each instant of eternal ages,
The Presence of All Good that was and is
And shall be: for the Universe is His:
He is the Universe! And He presages
His Own advent and triumph, long foretold
In every star that wondering seers behold.

RHEIMS

In rapt imagination many times
I 've stood and watch'd and worship'd in thy streets,
Where bursting steel shrieks death, and loud hoofbeats
Of cavalry instead of evening chimes

Are heard, O burnt and desecrated Rheims!
Christ's fairest monument no longer greets
The beauty-loving eye, nor proudly meets
Man's highest expectation! The soul climbs
To heights like this in carvèd stone no more.
Imperious and irreverent is man:
Busy with armies and material schemes,
Kings have their dark way with him as of yore.
He spares to God what little time he can
From building mortal power on Love's demolish'd
dreams.

THE ARROW-HEAD

LATE I was toiling through the fields
Behind the weary harrow,
When down in the torn and dizzy soil
I spied this Indian arrow!
I stopp'd the team, went back and found it,
And wove my usual dreams around it.

It is an ugly thing to prize,
With its thirsty, ragged edges;
And many a brow of glittering eyes
Has aim'd it from the sedges.
I see in the dense twilight wood
A warrior lying where he stood.

But that was tribe and tribe ago.
The very centuries have forgotten.
Ancient rivers have ceas'd to flow;
And granite rocks lie old and rotten.
Bird-clouds, vast herds of mastodon,
Moundbuilders, bison, all are gone.

Still hard as God's eternal truth,
This rude work of a savage mason
Down from the wild dawn of our youth
Comes with its silent lesson —
Comes with its promise and its warning
Out of the darkness of the morning.

And as I stood in that wide field,
That in the Spring would grow and ripen,
I saw the day when men shall yield
To patient God. For it shall happen
That man to man shall stand reveal'd:
And in his hand will be no weapon.

SONNETS TO H. L. H.

SONNETS TO H. L. H.

I

OF HIS APPROPRIATE ENTITY

THERE are as many ways as there are men;
And each man's way is right to him alone.
Let Walt be Walt, Tennyson Tennyson;
Be thou thyself; and let me ply my pen
In my own simple manner where and when
And in what cause I will. Strike the key tone!
What pitch were truest shall in time be shown:
But ah, too late! Try not that note again.
Nature ascends in circles non-reëntrant,
By perturbations never suffer'd twice
To be the same, and we perforce obey
The slightly varying change, eccentric, centrant,
Each balanc'd personality held nice
Within the sacred limits of free play.

II

HIS NOBLE BIRTH

IMMENSE the pride I through my sire inherit
From humble high ancestry without taint;
While from my mother, she herself a saint
Of unecclesiastical free spirit,
I gather to my songs the simple merit
Of quiet Quakers innocently quaint,
And mind and soul in passionate restraint,
I read their Sacred Book and still revere it.
Oh! tell me not such worthy pioneers
Were native but to wild monotonous woods.
Well might we learn to-day their lesson deep,
Wrung from snarl'd soil and stain'd with penitent tears,
Alone with God in those vast solitudes,
Where the bent bones of our forefathers sleep.

III

HIS WARY RESTLESSNESS

I AM as hard to hold as some wild being!
Shy creature of these rivers and these woods,
Now I invite and now I flee my moods,
Beside myself with relishing and fleeing!

All touch, all ears, all scent, all taste, all seeing,
United all in a quick multitude
Of govern'd lust, ungovernable good,
Agreements calm amidst fierce disagreeing!
I would not that one other soul alive
Should be like me, nor I like any other.
One is enough of each, more were too many.
For every restful thought I still must strive
As for existence, must escape or smother!
Must think with angels, though I seem not any.

IV

HIS AUSTERE SUBMISSION

To proud remote obscurity I cling.
I dare not condescend from high hauteur
Which guards my meditations, lest I err
From primitive simplicity and bring
Change o'er the spirit of the songs I sing.
Susceptible is my strong heart to stir
With passion! Whence I peaceably prefer
Aloof to hold my course unwavering.
Held in an awful sense of isolation
Is he who must interpret for all time
The Spirit of God's Law epitomized

In private sympathy with all Creation.
A loneliness beneficent, sublime,
Uplifts him, charms his words, and makes them prized.

V

HIS ONE PURPOSE

FORGIVE if my too child-wise contemplation
Exclusive seem of lore that calls me down
From primal knowledge. Each must guard his own.
Each builder must reject without evasion,
Must choose and lift on every occasion
By every means, from strength to strength, one stone
Upon another, till he stand full grown
Upon his monument and tell his vision!
Let each by his intuitive design
Build his own sacred temple like a master!
Time shall decide which were most fit to stand.
It may be yours; perhaps it shall be mine;
It may be both should have been simpler, vaster.
Build boldly, as the Architect hath plann'd.

VI

HIS THINKING

I DARE not give o'ermuch consideration
To what promotes not peace. My mind selects
Out of a host of scientific facts,
And from all human life, its education,
To nurture wisdom and avoid vexation,
Knowing each chosen thought acts and reacts
Through and upon the bliss which it protects
From wasteful and irreverent invasion.
Within throng'd and besieged ; defiled without :
Few are admitted to the inner court,
And to the holiest of holies none.
Hence, from the world there entereth no doubt
To violate the altar of my heart,
However I may seem to be undone.

VII

HIS FRANK SELF-EXPRESSION

OBSCURE and down and out as the world goes,
I know I am a seer in plain disguise,
Living above ambition, for a prize
Which angels see, but no man living knows,

And few have ever cared for. I compose
Out of my unapplauded sacrifice
An immortality which proves me wise,
And makes my life acceptable with those
Who shall hereafter understand its aim.
For I who seem to muse of self am singing
The sacred song given me to impart,
The song that was born in me. I disclaim
Fictitious verse, and am through sorrow bringing
Unto my people all I have, my heart.

VIII

HIS JOYOUS ESCAPE

As blood from out my aching heart God wrings
These passionate proud numbers. A fine pleasure
Throbs in each willing and submissive measure,
Felt but by me, unless glad reader brings
A chasten'd, contrite and wise love that sings
Response to noble utterance. Yon deep azure
Views its benevolent profound composure
In any little brook whose murmurings
Make a melodious chime of crystal sighing
In tones kaleidoscopic as it flows,
Dashing its life in prisms over the gravel,

Through tangled roots, down rocks, past the wild rose,
And on, a river, out to sea, where travel
The stately ships before the free winds flying.

IX

ON HIS GENIUS

LET all men absolutely and eternally
Be their best selves as they, not others, see it.
If thou desirest to be something, be it.
Thou shalt not wait; but with the Earth diurnally
Shalt thou about God's business go, supernally
Crown'd with success, for God shall guarantee it.
Doth nearer duty hold thee? Do not flee it:
Love honor first, else must thou fail infernally.
Genius original is plain and old
And common as the rocks beneath thy feet;
Sky-deep, child-wise, fresh as this autumn air.
See how these frostbit leaves blush red and gold.
Approaching Winter turns this tree's blood sweet.
Next Summer's shade dreams in these boughs now bare.

X

HIS CHARACTER

THY bedrock honest will, both speech and hand,
Inspires just men's considerate respect.
Wealth, fame, position, studiously neglect:
Honor embraces all. Ocean, sky, land,
Sunshine and clouds, immensity, sea-sand,
Systems of stars that have been rear'd and wreck'd,
With worlds that intimately now affect
Thought with sublime suggestion still and grand,
All are upheld on honor; on honor all
Must through destruction ever be brought round
Continuous as He Whose Life they are,
In process after process, rise and fall,
Bound in one Mind, in changeless honor bound,
Body with Spirit, angel and man and star.

XI

HIS ART

UNTO three facts in honor art thou bound:
The natural, the human, the divine.
Art must be born of Nature: from dark mine
Jewels and precious ore, flesh from the ground.

But men are beings who themselves dumbfound.
The thinking head, however coarse or fine,
Transcends this brute enlargement of the spine:
Humanity is Nature's full compound.
If this were all, All would be wanting yet.
From this intelligent essence of the Earth
Came one stupendous guess, and hence another,
How nurs'd, who knows? — creature and Maker met —
Born of the ground by a perpetual birth,
Here is God's beast communing with man's Father!

XII

HIS PHILOSOPHICAL PIONEERING

THERE is deep joy ineffable, serene,
Uplifting, in the conscious thoughts that rise
Through noble intellectual exercise
Into those realms of steadfast trust between
The known and unknown worlds where we convene
As heroes from the Earth, taking the Skies
By long unwearied siege. Scouts and sharp spies,
Alert, imagining what none have seen,
We counsel, cipher, despatch, testifying
Faint intuitions, with firm confidence
Respecting one another's words as faiths

Past scientific : hopes more doubt-defying
Than accurate knowledges deduced from sense ;
Heart's loves that must survive beneficent deaths.

XIII

AND ON HIS BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY

Time and eternity in us contending,
Will all too soon effectually shatter
These tenements of mind-assembled matter
Beyond the power of our mortal mending.
The strength of youth too soon we must be spending
To eke out age ; while from our hearts we scatter
Sorrow and happiness for worse or better,
That in their influence are never-ending.
But thou and I with Universal Law
Have made our timeless and eternal peace.
Here birthdays of the flesh we celebrate ;
But that dread Birth which no flesh ever saw,
When all this life apparently shall cease,
We keep in sacred wonder without date.

APOLOGIA

APOLOGIA

I

"I'VE WISHED I'D BEEN BORN PROSE"

I 've wish'd I 'd been born prose, like most my brothers,
Whose unimaginative sense discreet
Is to plain purpose perfect and doth meet
Life's ordinary need, as all good mothers
Are perfect to their children. Poetry bothers
Most people ; which most people cannot eat
Nor wear, how much less read! Hence the hard feat
They leave to teachers and a few rare others.
Shamelessly awkward would rude mankind be
Without fine sense of fitness which expresses
Taste in some things as some day 't will in all.
Could I enchant what beauty I now see
To words as lovely as in summer dresses
Ladies and children look, would that be small?

II

"IF BOLDLY I COULD CHARM

If boldly I could charm to vigorous verse
Half what I see and think and feel. — But no,
I cast it, yet it will not come out so.
Th' excruciating agony pains worse
With each fine failure. Nature, patient nurse,
Instructs me, but so fresh my fancies flow,
Now tears, now laughter, solemn now and slow,
So pregnant full of meaning, so perverse,
Art cannot in soul-satisfying measure
Compete with life in the swift ravishment
Of warm full-blooded senses. Nor were truth
Further'd in leaving nothing to the pleasure
Of ready imagination. Art's intent
Surpasses all achievement. Art is Youth.

III

"IF I COULD TELL

If I could tell what beauty I behold
In this wild world so wonderful to me,
The pale moon brightening o'er the twilight sea,
Where ages heave and sigh, — could I unfold

How ships give up their sunset white and gold,
Blending themselves in blue immensity,
The sweet stars how come forth, how fair they be,
What secrets to my heart the deep hath told,—
Could I instruct one backward human being
In the Love lore that in my soul I feel,
My inmost spirit yearnings could impart,
Could but half utter what so many seeing
See not, because to them Heaven is not real,—
My God, could I but bless one human heart!

IV

"SONG WOULD NOT BE"

Song would not be the futile joy it seems
Pent in my passionate bosom all unheard,
Uncherish'd, save in secret. Each living word,
Wrought in the fragile fabric of my dreams,
Though precious to none other, glows and gleams
With Heaven's own light to me. Yon glad wild bird,
The flute of whose clear voice just sweetly stirr'd
These woods to lyric echoes, God esteems.
Give me one soul to love and I will sing!
Yea, love may wound my heart, it cannot hush
The music of its beating! The deep dells

Of my own secret solitude shall ring
With lyric pain, as when some woodland thrush,
Pensively sweet, its love at twilight tells!

V

"CHRIST BY THE HASTY MOB"

CHRIST by the hasty mob hail'd, crucified;
By slow disciples tardily proclaim'd:
And if the greatest Name that ere was named
Went down in infamy, while from His side
His few friends fled, shall I who have not died,
Much less made void the grave, be half ashamed
That I am not all suddenly far-famed,
One voice in this now busier world more wide?
The race must guard her progress at all hazards,
Publishers theirs, I mine, with wise delay.
God save from fools! And from ourselves as oft.
Many false teachers rise, and many wizards
Astonish, are forgotten in a day.
Make my path straight, and let the truth be scoff'd!

VI

"I'LL FEEL WELL PAID"

I'LL feel well paid if after I am gone
A few choice followers of Christ perceive
My simple import and in God believe
With more implicit confidence. Thereon
My life is founded. I have nothing done
To merit man's esteem. My songs I leave,
Trusting to help some heart that needs must grieve,
Because I also have been such an one.
Let me reiterate until I die
The gratitude I feel for having been
Born in an age of promise ere fruition
Tints all Love's warmer and serener sky
With song and fragrance. The mild Spring comes in
Snowbound, awaiting not man's recognition.

VII

"THOU WHO ART SACREDLY ALONE"

THOU Who art sacredly alone in this,
That Thou, Christ, honorest the homeless art
To which I cling, from which I cannot part,
O pure and brave! how oft with faithful kiss

Thou, when rude winds have dealt by me amiss,
Hast tided gently out my stranded heart
From shoal to deep, till I again could start
Full-canvass'd on the broad blue sea of bliss!
I've had more than my share of pleasure here,
Hence more of pain; but this I take with that,
Thankful for both, since both in Christ agree
To guide my human heart more and more near,
Step after step through many a hard combat,
Safely, O Father, Home at last to Thee!

VIII

"WE YET CAN TRIUMPH"

We yet can triumph. We have tried and fail'd
And tried again and fail'd again and tried.
Many a time I've wish'd that I had died
Before I saw the light. But though I quail'd,
Yet have I stubbornly my fate assail'd
With dazed determination, dignified
With prayer and gratitude, and always cried
Thy will be done, O God! And God prevail'd.
We cannot always choose: it were not best:
God knows; and if we trust all will be well.
I pray it with shut eyes and open mind:

I want, be it with all my soul attest,
Nothing that will not ultimately tell
To the eternal good of all mankind!

IX

"WHAT IF I FAIL"

WHAT if I fail, so long as man succeeds!
Doth each not triumph in the general rise!
Prosperity men manage to devise
Waits not on one, but meets the nations' needs
With cunning artifice and swifter speeds,
That still react through cunning hands and eyes
To stir and spur all peoples till man flies,
Borne soul and body upon winged steeds!
What though I fail, man cannot fail. God fail?
Sad body-failure is glad soul-success!
They die victorious who unconquer'd die!
Age of triumphant Toil, I bid you Hail!
Applauding, I forget my small distress!
Lost in God's glory I am more than I!

X

"NONE SEEMS TO CARE"

None seems to care. I seem to care too much.
Man's frivolous unconcern for solemn sense
More saddens me than the incompetence
Of interfering critics who ne'er touch
Just words without first feeling in their clutch
Those greasy thanks most current with the dense.
If I could never progress without pence
I'd stick stock-fast forever, scorning such!
My time will come, slow, sure and bountiful.
Not in the sudden fiction meteor's hour
Shall my immortal flame flare forth and die,
Clear star refulgent, with a steady pull
On warring factions. Glow, my golden flower!
Waft blushes of scented music through the sky!

XI

"MOUNT UP ON WINGS"

Mount up on wings exultant, O my spirit!
Man having brought thee forth cannot destroy
Thy human voice, the voice of God Whose joy
Thou without passport or acknowledged merit

Didst of old prophets and wise bards inherit!
Therefore climb up and sing, perennial boy!
Let nothing evil in man's nature cloy
Thy message, but be forward to declare it!
Wage on the world thy love! Thou art a prince,
A Heavenly envoy in disguise of youth:
Bear thyself nobly, and feel free to speak!
Speak in full tones of blood that shall convince
Gainsaying men that thou thyself art truth!
For thou art strong who thinkest thyself weak.

XII

"THY QUIVERING BODY"

THY quivering body is thy just safeguard.
Hadst been born flesh, been robust, big and stout,
That strength, which nimbly thou wast made without,
Had boosted thy proud soul and made thee hard;
Whereas, although a passionate fierce bard,
Thou art most tender-hearted and devout,
Able to learn, think, speak, put lies to rout,
Nor hast one handicap thou wouldst discard.
Thou to God's apt use art precisely built,
As all men are, who prove they are divine.
I would not have thee other than thou art.

Thou art not putty overlaid with gilt;
Nor thin mahogany veneer on pine;
But best like other honest men, at heart.

XIII

"WHAT IF MY STRENGTH"

WHAT if my strength prevail not: is our flesh
All there is of us? Have I fallen quite?
Is nothing yet reserv'd to my delight
Of all I once enjoy'd? Still cool and fresh
I feel the dew that never vanisheth
From Love's green hills where youthful poets write;
And still at evening as at morning light
I'll flute and listen and await my death.
Fair in high noon out on the purple seas
Majestic argosies and clouds I watch
And marvel at their glory, like a boy
Dreaming, who never tires of mysteries,
But feels upon his hair his father's touch,
And in his heart shareth his father's joy.

XIV

"PEACE, PEACE"

PEACE, peace; rest, O my heart! high in the hope
That all men some day shall feel interest
In each man's task, and each man shall be blest
In all men's good. Then free in the wide scope
Of ampler thinking shall the Heavens ope
Before a race destined to meet Heaven's test,
Till God in myriads be manifest
Without one coward or one misanthrope.
Then shall the spirit of sweet Poesy
Prelude the Christ-led hosts of lyric saints
On their triumphal progress through the skies
To the deep musics of Eternity,
Unmarr'd with sadness. Hush'd the old complaints
That from unlovely hindrances arise.

XV

"I'LL WAIT ON GOD"

I'LL wait on God forever! Stage by stage,
Truth will come true, and needs not my forecast,
Nor any man's. Scientists clinch facts fast:
Prophets announce to each succeeding age

The Advent of Creation: saint and sage
Treasure the garner'd wisdom of the past
Wrought out in scholarship and bound at last
To prove or disprove every printed page.
I 'll wait on God forever by His help
And in His strength rejoice! His child am I,
Through His broad Universe expatiating!
As the fierce lion roareth for his whelp
And shakes the jungle, so the Lord Most High
Shall come for me, here in His wide world waiting!

THE END

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